NMX

no. 18

35p

VENDINO PACT , THE SPASMS , OBJET D'ART , GREY LENS MEN , PAST 7 DAYS , CHANT , MARTIN KELNER OF RADIO HALLAM , RETURN OF THE MUSICAL JANEENS , CRAMPED LEGS , READERS POLL 1980 , NEW C.V. & T.M.B.R. SINGLES , PLUS ALL THE USUAL GARBAGE .

DVA LP PREVIEW

Virgin

RECORD & TAPE STORES

I Shouldn't really be writing this but I'm a self indulgent bugger at heart. I mean the latest and greatest album by Bruce Springsteen has just been released and how would you feel if your life had just flashed by you condensed onto a double L.P? Anyway if you have it good on ya and if you don't then get it very soon. O.K so It may not go with the raincoat and the T.G. badge but It'll do ya good.

Apart from the essential (Bruce) we have lots of good stuff. Pic Sleeve import Singles, Small label 45's, Big label L.P's, and moderately sized label E.P's. You name it, we might have it. If not James will no doubt convince you that It'll be in next week.

I don't suppose too many of you noticed that a short time ago one of the best rock drummers of all time kicked the proverbial bucket. Remember him

ISSUE 18

Another month , another 'NMX' , another 35p . Why do I do it ? Why do you buy it ? What is the meaning of life ? Well , I could fill the whole magazine with this sort of drivel but you want action,adventure , excitement and violence so let's get on with it ....

This issue represents something of a back to my punky roots special , with stuff on the Dead Kennedys , which is well outside 'NMX's usual scope of coverage , and reports on the state of punk in the furthest corners of the empire , like Worksop , Chesterfield and Matlock , in the shapes of Best Left Dead , The Spasms and Grey Lens Men respectively . More predictably there's odds and sods about Cabs , Com-Sats , DVA , Vendino Pact and other lesser known favourites of mine , and the 'NMX' Readers Poll 1980 . Last year there was a great response for this but I'd like even better this year . See elsewhere for details of categories etc.

The big Human League split is hot news as I write , though by the time you read this it will have long since been all over the papers and Martyn Ware will be making his first LP with Yes or something so I just want to say I knew about it before you .

Paul Widger of ClockDVA wants it to be known he doesn't hold grudges against journalists and when I said last month 'we are on speaking terms again' this was merely a journalistic ploy and the only reason we were ever not on speaking terms was because I was on the other side of the world and we've always loved each other really . And one or two other DVAtionists were reportedly not amused by the Rentakil d fake interview on the back of Issue 17 . Who are Rentakil d anyway ?

This month 'NMX' should be back to something approaching normal size , but I'd like to point out to everyone who reckoned they weren't getting value for money that in making it this big I could actually end up losing money , and as I have to make a full time living out of 'NMX' at the moment , not through choice but through force of circumstance , that's serious . Things are so desperate in fact that I can hardly afford to continue living in Sheffield and may be going off on my globetrotting travels again . You may wonder how I can afford to do this when I'm allegedly broke , but when you've as much experience of ligging as I have free air tickets is simple . I was going to see Cabaret Voltaire in Vancouver but the Northern half of their American tour was cancelled . By the time this mag is on the streets they'll probably be back home , that's always assuming Richard Kirk has overcome his fear of flying and not decided a boat would be safer . Anyway , whatever happens 'NMX' will keep going , the next issue possibly a New Year special . I'm intending to set up my own printing press and will be looking for work so any fanzine writers looking for fast cheap service , groups wanting posters or handbills done , get in touch .

Keith Strong has left 'The Star' , the music section of which is now written by Martin Lilleker , who at least appears to be under 100 years old , and within the restrictions of writing for a family newspaper manages to get some quite interesting stuff in print . Keith Strong is rumoured to have gone to Germany with Def Leppard and now be in Spain writing a book about a rising young star he's discovered called Joe Cocker !

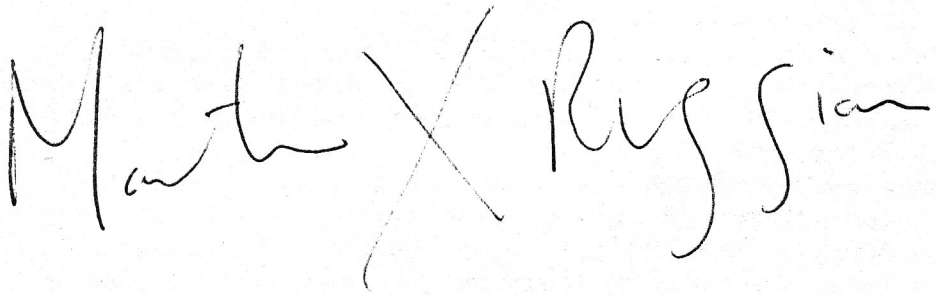
And now the news you've all been waiting for : They Must Be Russians are re-forming . Russ has recruited Bob Eadie of Alien Heat/Defective Turtles/ Mystery Cults fame and a synth player called Nick . More members are required and they won't be gigging till they're sure they can live up to the reputation as a proper band which the last line-up built , and that could be some time yet .

And now a Marcus Featherby story : when 'Bouquet Of Steel' was just released Our friend Marcus got word that Record Mirror had detailed local correspondent Paul Bower to review it . Now as Bower , like one or two other people , is not a great friend of Featherby the Aardvark man suspected he might give the

Sheffield compilation an unpleasantly biased write-up , so he asked Record Mirror if someone else could do it instead . Always willing to oblige an ex-contributor , they gave the job to Chris Westwood instead . Bower , unaware of these dealings behind his back , sent in his review regardless , which was put to one side and not used . Accordingly , Chris Westwood's bit was published , more or less saying the LP was pointless and not very good either . Poetic justice you may think , especially when , according to Paul Bower , he'd given it a five out of five rating and instructed everyone to buy it immediately !

Finally , to close this monthly column of malicious gossip , lies and libel I won't reveal which member of which band has been further betraying his hippy past by following the well trodden path to the mushroom fields at Fox House . All I will say that if a well known local manager , mentioned somewhere else in this editorial , gets made a mushroom pizza by one of his proteges it may not be all it seems !

Love and kisses to everyone ,



SUBSCRIPTION RATES : £1.25 for three issues , from 238 South Road , Sheffield 6 .
BACK ISSUES : None left here at all , though Rough Trade and Better Badges may be able to help .

READERS POLL 1980

Voting is for Sheffield area bands only . List your choices and send them to the above address (might as well vote for the chart while you're about it) .

1. Favourite band
2. Hicks from the sticks i.e. band from Doncaster/Barnsley/Chesterfield or similar nearby non-cultural centres .
3. 1980 single .
4. Local band album - as this section wasn't in last year's poll any albums count , they don't have to have been released this year .
5. Compilation track - local bands contributions to 'Hicks' , 'Bouquet' , '1980' or 'Logical Steps' .
6. Worst band .
7. Brightest hope - any band with no vinyl product out yet .
8. Singer
9. Guitarist
10. Drummer
11. Bassist
12. Keyboards/anything elsist
13. Most missed defunct Sheffield band (note Russians & Janeens aren't defunct)
14. Poseur(s) of the year .

Dead Kennedys

There's a new name on the leather jackets of the nations most volatile youth culture . The Dead Kennedys are a punk band from San Francisco , a band who sing about their country's decay with more passion and in a fashion more potent and relevant than the Clash ever were here . And yet they're in the sad position of being better known and more popular here than on the other side of the Atlantic . Their album 'Fresh Fruit For Rotting Vegetables' is second in the alternative charts as I write , but in the U.S. it's availiable only as an import . The big companies won't touch them because of their controversial name and nature and the independants are at such an early stage of development their distribution is inferior to the import network . In an effort to change this Rough Trade have opened a branch in San Francisco and the Dead Kennedys relish the possibility of working with them eventually . At the moment though , nothing's doing .

The album is one of the best punk has produced,as powerful as the UK Subs but at the same time subtler , more varied and inventive . It includes the superb 'Holiday In Cambodia' , brimming with sublime menace , and a version of the earlier 'California Uber Alles' which first brought the band to our attention when it came out last year on Fast Product . Live , their finer points tend to get submerged in the full tilt pogo music deluge of two and a half minute classics , though Ray , Klaus and Ted (not real names) , who play guitar , bass and drums respectively , are obviously talented and inventive musicians . I caught the soundcheck at their recent Leadmill gig and heard them jamming on the theme of the growling intro to 'Holiday ...' and it was superb , but at the gig later they delivered more or less a faithful approximation of the record . Still , it was good stuff , one of the most exciting gigs I've seen in ages . On stage the three musicians keep well in the background , concentrating on doing their job rather than putting on a show , but their comparative anonymity is more than compensated for by singer Jello Biafra , a truly incredible frontman who really gets into the spirit of the music , leaping around like the floor's on fire , all the while performing a kind of epileptic mime routine of doubtful relevance . He sings in a deep , Germanic voice - when he sings 'California Uber Alles' you can imagine the all-American stormtroopers sieghailing , though at the Leadmill he stopped in mid number to berate the more mindless punks who were giving the Nazi salute and explain , as if they didn't know anyway , that it's an ANTI-NAZI song , directed at closet Nazis masquerading under a banner of respectability everywhere . Overall the audience responded in usual fashion , pogoing madly , gobbing at the small army of photographers cowering at the side of the stage (Marcus Featherby got a direct hit !) and going beserk when Jello caused the organisers-turned-unwilling security men nightmares by doing suicide leaps into the crowd . By the end of the set his clothes were ripped to shreds .

Jello loves talking . I reckon he could go on for days non-stop about American politics , as no doubt I would if an American wanted my views on British politics . When I wanted to do an interview the other three wandered off , no doubt realising from past experience they wouldn't get a word in edgeways . After nearly an hour of near monologue Jello insisted the interview was only just getting underway and suggested we continue after he'd finished signing autographs and satisfying the curiosity of the dozens of punks hanging around . At 1.30 , when the fans got kicked out and Jello put his woolly hat on so he could continue talking to them in the street , I decided it was time to give up and go home . What follows is a bit of what we did get down .....

"We missed Dingwalls , not because I got thrown in jail for not paying my rent . There was irregularities in my passport . They wouldn't give it back . They just fucked around with it for a few days : "We're not open till Monday , can't have it back , ha ha !" I figure it was a combination of ... maybe , maybe not a deliberate attempt to fuck me around , plus a fair dose of bureaucratic incompetence."

How did it get in the papers that you were in jail for not paying your rent ?

'Ask Virgin publishing . Everybody says "Did you put that in the paper ?" "No" "Did you ?" "No , I had nothing to do with that" . They must have made it up .

'I've signed more autographs after Scarborough than I have in the last two years . People are souvenir crazy round here.'

How do the audiences compare here with in America?

'It's pretty equal . People in the States don't give support bands such a hard time . They're interested rather than saying "Entertain Us . We're against you" . They're for the support band !

PUNK IN THE U.S. :

'The punk scene has been thriving in America for practically as long as it has in England , just nobody over here seems to know that . It's not as popular . 95% of American kids are still into AC/DC or something , but there's still a lot of real good bands . A lot of the early bands didn't get any attention and just broke up because they weren't able to break out of a certain city , like The Avengers , The Dils .'

STANDING FOR ELECTION AS MAYOR OF SAN FRANCISCO :

'It was a spur of the moment thing . I got 6,591 which is 3½% of the vote . I came in fourth out of ten people . I called my party the World Brotherhood of Peace and Anarchy . The person who actually won was saying she wanted to clean up Market Street , one of the main thoroughfares , which is part banks , part skid row , so I said , fine , let's clean up Market Street by making the businessmen wear clown suits from nine to five . Other parts of the platform were banning cars from the city , making the cops run for re-election , voted on by the neighbourhoods they patrolled - that one got a lot of support - another one was to hire all the laid off city employees as panhandlers on a 50% comission . They would concentrate on rich neighbourhoods and keep half the money for themselves and half to keep the city still operating . The reason for that was a proposition in a state ballot initiative where the people of California voted not to pay taxes any more . Basically it was packaged as a tax break for the lower middle classes , but it was really a tax break for businessms and the upper middle classes . The poor actually got their taxes raised . This is the sort of Reaganoid California Uber Alles mentality we're talking about . Slowly but surely... the schools are having to crowd fifty people into a class instead of twenty or thirty . And when Ronald Reagan was governor of California - he was Brown's predecessor - he cut the state budget to the point where they had to close mental hospitals and just kick people out on the street the result being there were several rather colourful mass murders !'

HOLIDAY IN CAMBODIA :

'I went to college for two and a half months and noticed that all the people there weren't into learning anything or into any kind of change . They just wanted to make sure they made a lot of money and got a job with the corporation and in their spare time they could show off their stereos , get stoned and fuck , so I thought what better way to wake them up than to send them on a holiday to Cambodia . See how many places they can run their skateboards down the street .'

Do you get any harassment on account of your political stance ?

'From the average person in the street , no , for the most part anyway , but as far as finding places to play and general respect , yes we do . Like our album isn't coming out in America yet because no company will take it . They say "They have to change the name" . They basically just want it as a kiss-ass gesture because as you may or may not know even people like Siouxsie and the Banshees and the UK Subs have never had an album out in America . Banshees got one then they got dropped . The only bands the American record companies will push are skinny type pop bands . The American record companies are into ripping off the fashion from new wave or punk without taking any of the meaning and aiming it at the adult rock market that buys Eagles records , 'cause the post-World War II baby boom where you had so many people that were 20-25 in 1968 are now 30-35 and they dominate the consumer market so everything is aimed at them , including music , though as a token gesture to kids they'll keep pushing shitty heavy metal bands and other bozo bands , but for the most part they're just another tool for the corporations that run America to sedate the people so they don't start to think , or start to organise about the system that practically everyone in America agrees fucks them up the ass . The average American will say "Yeah , the oil companies are screwing me up the ass , yeah , I don't like the way the government is run"or whatever , but when you ask "What do you want to do about it ?" they either give you a blank stare or say "Oh , nothing , I just wanna light up another joint" or "I just want to get my own job and be left alone and get money" .

Do you try to avoid dealing with the music business ?

'We don't avoid dealing with them but we do enjoy attacking them . We were invited as a token new wave band to play this award ceremony , like a festival for local San Francisco bands .... "Best guitarist to Gerry Garcia , best keyboards player to the guy in the Doobie Brothers..." and they had Van Morrison come on and play , and other people , so we came on and played a few bars of 'California Uber Alles' and then stopped it and played this ultra-wimpy slow boring FM pop tune but the lyrics were a scathing attack on the music industry aimed at specific people in the audience doing everything but mentioning them by name , with the chorus "Is my cock big enough , is my brain small enough for you to make me a star ? Give me a toot (which is a line of cocaine) and I'll sell you my soul , pull my strings and I'll go far" . At which point dead silence in the room . Then we did "Everybody put your hands together and sing" and they started to sing "Is my cock big enough..." and they stopped right there . And some people , like in Journey or Eddie Money were saying they agreed but they were glad someone had the nerve to say it , while others like Boz Scaggs were seen clawing their chairs . Bruce , our drummer , went up to Gerry Garcia in the dressing room below and said "Hey , I really liked your music fifteen years ago" and Gerry Garcia looked up and said "Well thanks man"'.

'One of the ways , especially in America , to make people think , which is the first step to change , is to annoy the fuck out of them . As Americans , from the first day they start school are taught - don't think , don't be creative , just obey and then you'll have a pretty wife with big boobs , you'll have a big car , you'll have a big house and you too can live in a suburb with a nice job with the corporation . Consequently if you draw things in abstract they'll hand the paper back and humiliate you in class and things until you draw a tree just like everybody else in the class does , a subtle form of destroying creative minds at an early age .'

'Recently we did something called the 'Turd Town Tour' where we played little towns way outside the main culture centres in California , places like Fresno , Stockton , Santa Rosa and others , and much to our surprise there was a fairly decent turn out and people really liked it . Fresno was the best because four hundred people turned up even though there was only two posters up in the entire town . They'd never had a punk show before and two local bands opened and they were both good so it's definitely spreading .'

The British press gives the impression that American punks are just into it as a fashion .

'That's because the British press pays too muc attention to New York and not enough attention to Los Angeles and San Francisco . In New York it's all pose , because the people there are all over thirty years old and they've been in bands since

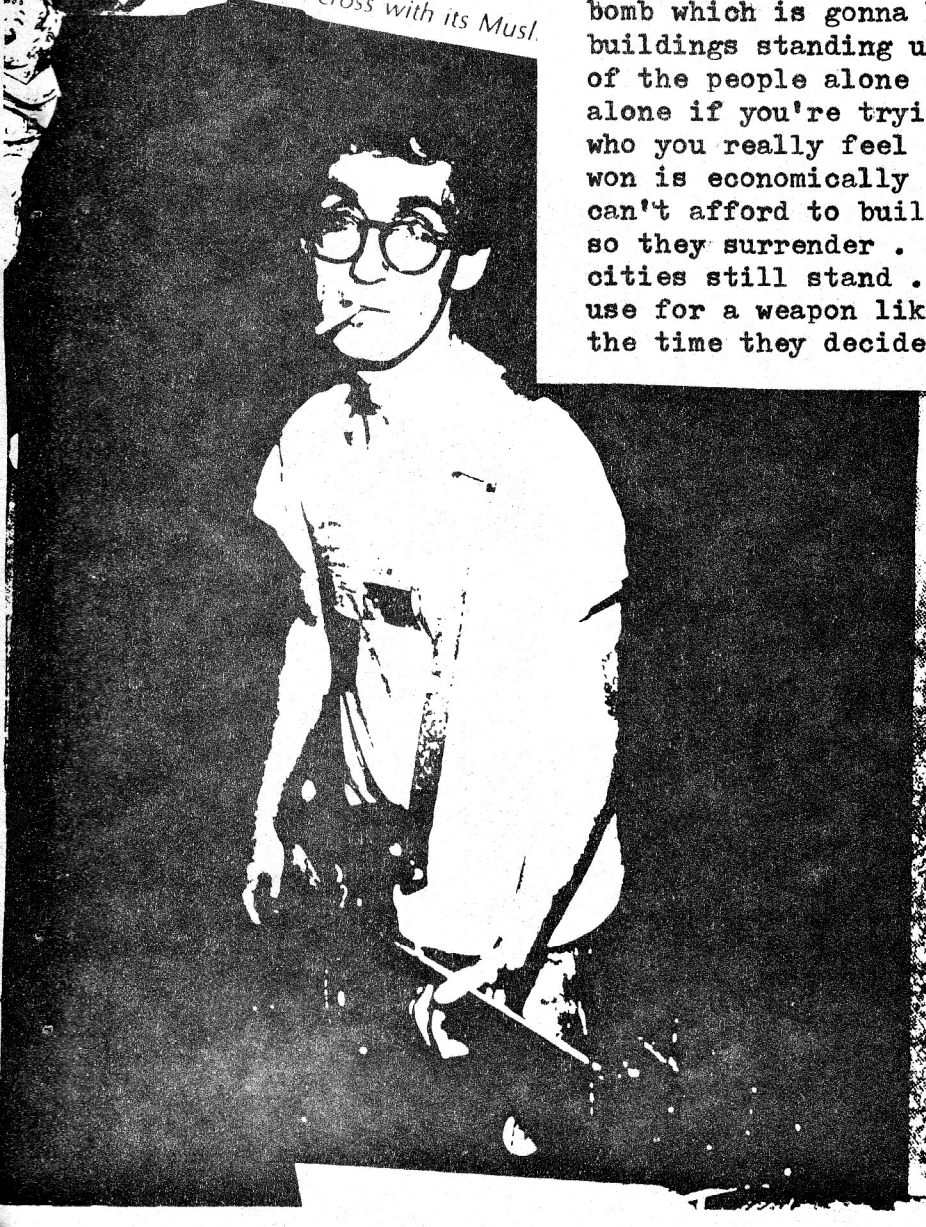
The red cross with its Musl

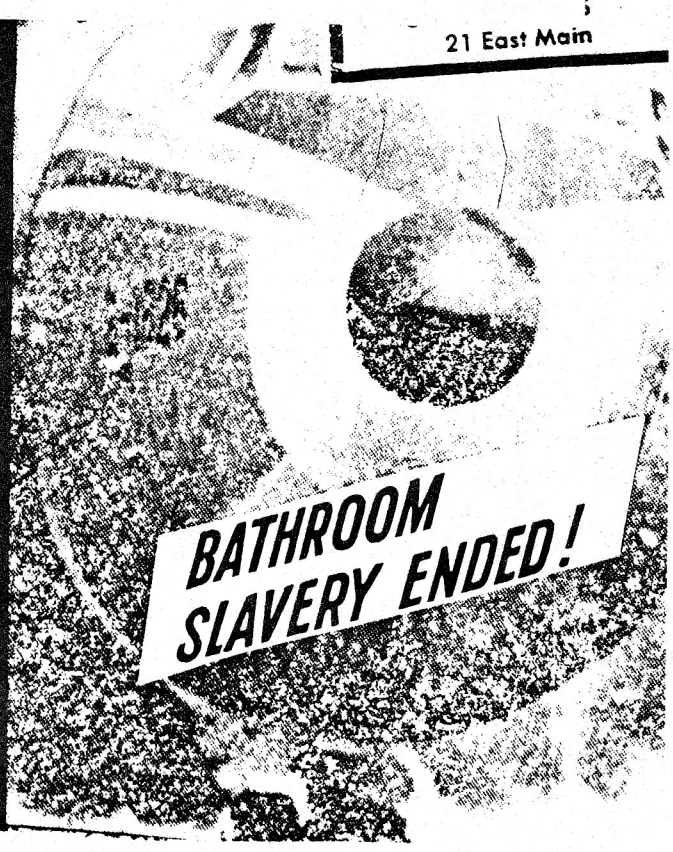
the days of the New York Dolls , and the clubs are so expensive the kids can't get in so they don't absorb the new music and don't start their own bands . The result is New York audiences just stand there and smoke and drink and analyse you . On the West coast there's a very deeply felt backlash against the posing . There's a thriving punk scene in Los Angeles , a thriving punk scene in the San Francisco Bay area , a real good one in Vancouver with D.O.A. and the Subhumans .'

'Social democracy is fine but I don't think any of the big industrialised Western nations are really ruled by the people that they vote for . I think we live in a feudalistic society where the corporations have replaced the barons in high castles and we're their serfs , whether we like it or not .'

'KILL THE POOR':

'It's based on a neutron bomb . It's from a very sarcastic point of view obviously . Anybody who reads the words will figure out that we don't really want to kill the poor . What it is is a warning saying the neutron bomb is not meant for use on the Russians and whoever 'the enemy' is - it's meant for use on large cities to clean them out when the population gets out of hand . Like , why build a bomb which is gonna knock people off but leave the buildings standing unless you're trying to get rid of the people alone and why get rid of the people alone if you're trying to win a war against someone who you really feel is the enemy ? The way wars are won is economically . You level their cities . They can't afford to build them up and make more bombs so they surrender . But with the neutron bomb the cities still stand . So I figure the only possible use for a weapon like that is they're saving it for the time they decide to drop it on major cities .'

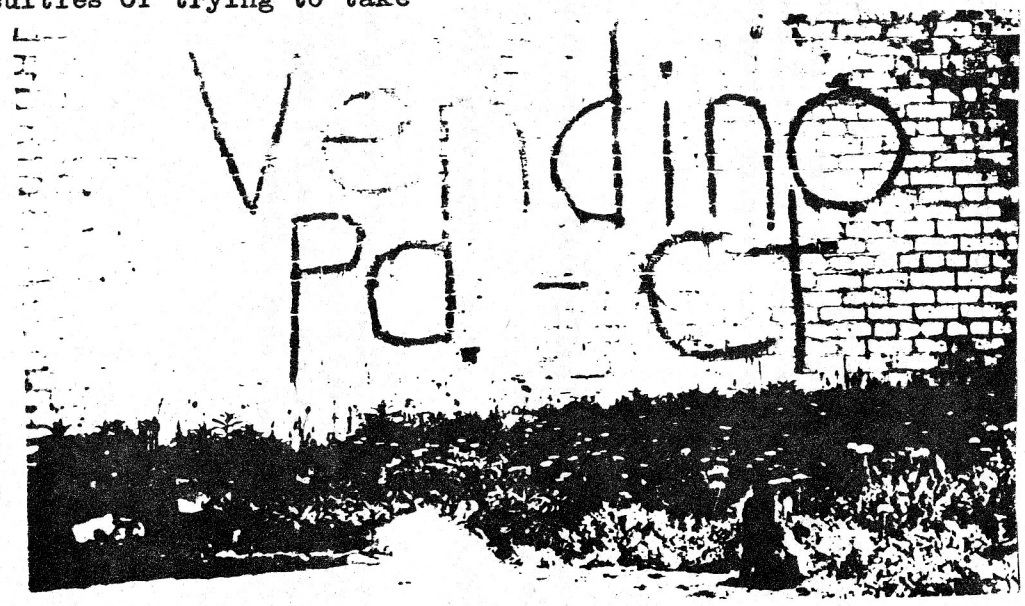




21 East Main

VENDINO PACT

It's over a year and a half since I started plugging Vendino Pact , but they've yet to gain the sort of national attention with which local prestige and acclaim unfortunately equates . Regular readers will know they're one of my favourite bands , and in my opinion they ought to be as safely on the way up as DVA or I'm So Hollow , though in fairness they haven't been around quite as long . This position is hopefully to be remedied sooner or later especially now they've enlisted the help of one Marcus O'Hagan as part-time , unpaid , non-contracted manager . The group point out the difficulties of trying to take the band seriously when all five members are intent on getting educational qualifications from Sheffield University next summer , though others would say the relatively secure living and large amount of leisure time availiable to them as students should give them the ideal opportunity . Lack of money has so far prevented them putting out an independent single or even making good demos to impress people with , their track on 'Bouquet Of Steel' being accepted as a mistake in both financial and musical terms , as they have doubts as to whether they'll even get their recording costs back and the recording of 'Secret Thinking' was well below the standard the song deserves and the group need to bring out their finer points .



Anyway , Vendino Pact are back after a break for the summer holidays , hoping to pick up the threads of the following they were steadily building . After they'd appeared at the Polytechnic as part of the Platform 1 local music festival in the summer a number of people told me how impressed they were , and the gigless gap at a time when their popularity was growing may have done them no good , They came back to Sheffield to find Marcus Featherby had booked them for a local band night at the Limit and the first they new of it was when they saw it advertised three days before the event . They immediately said they couldn't play , which had repercussions when the Limit refused to pay the replacement bands (Naughtiest Girl Was A Monitor also pulled out) on the dubious grounds that they hadn't been billed on the ads .

First gig they did play after getting back to rehearsals was supporting Wah ! Heat at Sorby Hall and they showed they've lost nothing while moving forward . I did have certain doubts - 'Inside Of Me' sounds a bit too much like a conventional rock song and the guitar solo in 'Through The Window' was truly appalling . On more familiar territory they were superb though , the now characteristic wall of melodic guitar , the minor chord riffs , John Stuart's tortured vocals (I admit I forgot him when I called Stuart Oxlade Sheffield's only individualist frontman) - everything was in place . 'Secret Thinking' and 'Wait For The Tear' were as spine chilling as ever , 'Watch Me Go' swinging and hanging in 'Playground Twist' style , all much appreciated by partisans and first time listeners alike .

I tried doing an interview with the band but it wasn't a success . When I get the chance to reach a broader audience than reads 'NMX' I'll talk and talk till somebody stops me , as Adrian Thrills or the bloke from the poly newspaper will testify , and yet Vendino Pact , knowing that if they had anything interesting to say they could say it and I'd print it , stonewalled my questions and chose to say nothing . Maybe I know them too well , and

contd. page 14

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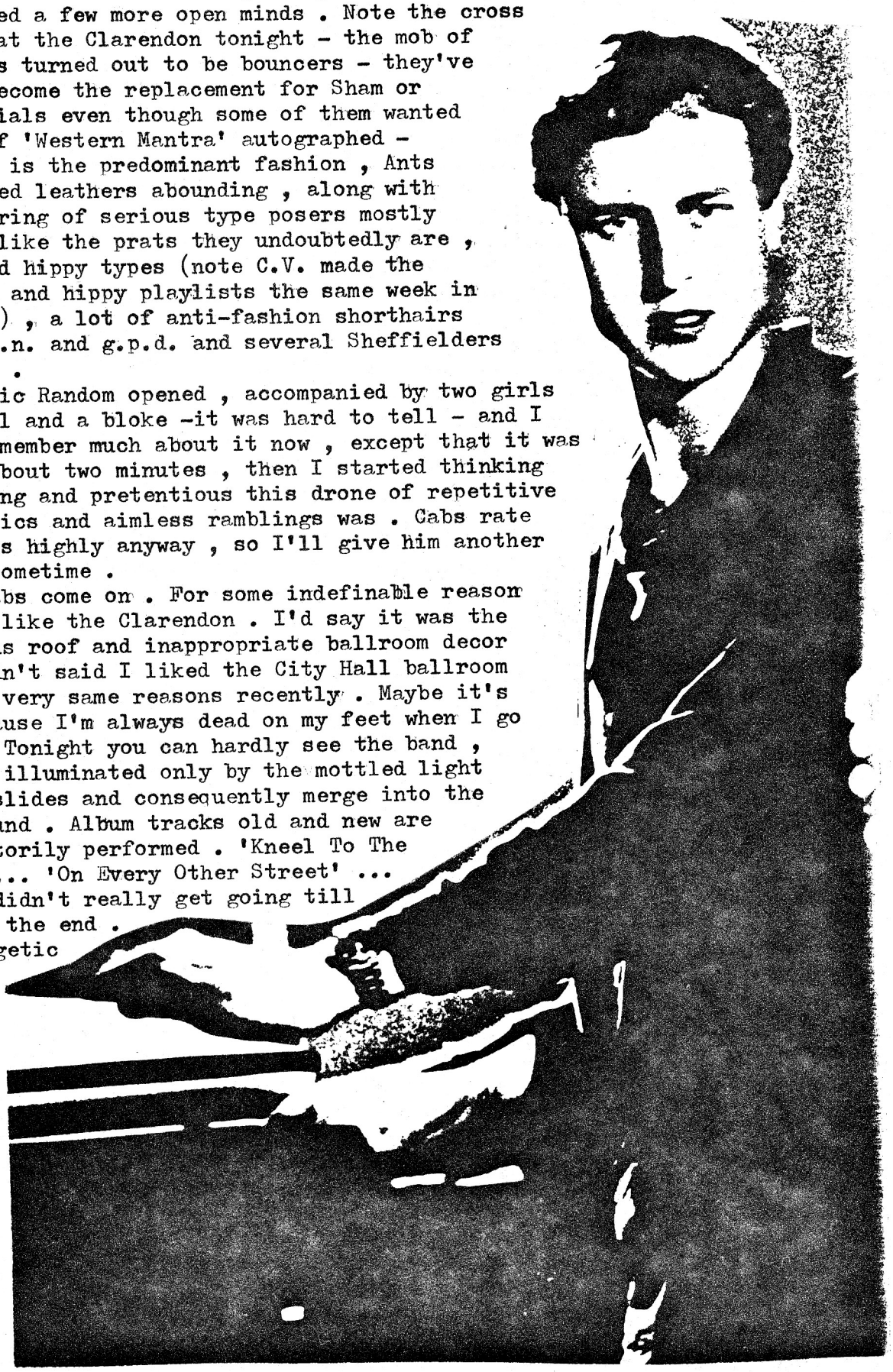
TWO NIGHTS IN LONDON

REFUSE - THE LIVE BIT

Just back from Europe and enjoying a few weeks sojourn in the old country before popping off to the West coast for American dates (these jet set pop stars !) , Cabaret Voltaire are playing a London date for the faithful and the curious at the Clarendon Hotel in Hammersmith . 'Voice Of America hasn't put the Cabs any closer to Abba status or damaged the big league and the superstar creating process in any way but , as a good album , it has shoved them a bit higher up the ladder , gained media coverage and interested a few more open minds . Note the cross section at the Clarendon tonight - the mob of skinheads turned out to be bouncers - they've yet to become the replacement for Sham or The Specials even though some of them wanted copies of 'Western Mantra' autographed - but punk is the predominant fashion , Ants emblazoned leathers abounding , along with a smattering of serious type posers mostly looking like the prats they undoubtedly are , a few old hippy types (note C.V. made the futurist and hippy playlists the same week in 'Sounds') , a lot of anti-fashion shorthairs like y.h.n. and g.p.d. and several Sheffielders in exile .

Eric Random opened , accompanied by two girls or a girl and a bloke -it was hard to tell - and I can't remember much about it now , except that it was OK for about two minutes , then I started thinking how boring and pretentious this drone of repetitive electronics and aimless ramblings was . Cabs rate his works highly anyway , so I'll give him another chance sometime .

Cabs come on . For some indefinable reason I don't like the Clarendon . I'd say it was the cavernous roof and inappropriate ballroom decor if I hadn't said I liked the City Hall ballroom for the very same reasons recently . Maybe it's just 'cause I'm always dead on my feet when I go there . Tonight you can hardly see the band , who are illuminated only by the mottled light of the slides and consequently merge into the background . Album tracks old and new are perfunctorily performed . 'Kneel To The Boss' .... 'On Every Other Street' ... Things didn't really get going till towards the end .
An energetic



'No Escape' got the crowd moving and near the climax of a marathon 'Western Mantra' a few punks staged probably the first stage invasion of the group's career , all in good humour of course , though the fab three looked more than a trifle concerned for the safety of their equipment . It was by no means a classic gig , my assessment being governed as much by circumstances as performance factors . They did their job .

A week and a half later I was piling into a van with the Com-Sat Angels to go and see them play bottom of a bill of five semi-name bands at the Lyceum on a Sunday night . Having to take the stage at 6.30 , before the bar was even open hardly made it a glamorous or prestigious gig , but despite the bands understandable doubts whether it was worth playing , and the inevitable sound problems - though they didn't suffer half as bad as others - it was a qualified success . Certainly they don't get many chances to play to such large audiences , or at least they hadn't previously , a steady inward flow of punters from 6.00 onwards ensuring the place was respectably full . According to the promoter this meant they were all dying to see the Com-Sat Angels , though in fact 90% were there to see Killing Joke and the rest were support bands barely worthy of attention and certainly no displays of enthusiasm . It was an uphill struggle , but while the bass buzzed and the keyboards disappeared in the mix , Mic's drumming held it together as inspirationally as ever . And why do people slag the Com-Sats' lyrics ? As far as I'm concerned they're the best , emotional and expressive , neither obvious nor obtuse . By the time they launched into 'Independence Day' , stunning as ever , one or two living beings were dancing but by then it was almost over . Vague calls for an encore not answered due to time restrictions . Someone who stayed all night told me they were the best band on and things went downhill from there onwards .

Me , I didn't stay , though if I'd paid to get in I would have done and I'd have enjoyed myself purposely so as not to feel cheated . Gpd doesn't like these affairs , but like the Futurama endurance trials the advantages must outweigh the drawbacks . £3.00 for five bands who you'd pay £1.50 each to see in a smaller venue , not to mention only one set of train fares (very expensive in London) and booze money . There's so many groups at least worth investigating this is the only practical way . Better to give people the opportunity of checking them out under less than perfect conditions than not at all .

Lilliput were next on : I saw them in their Kleenex days and liked them but tonight their jerky riffs and wailing cacophany sounded dreadfully monotone . Every number's end was greeted by dead silence , quite an achievement considering there must have been well over a thousand present . They have a podgy girl singer who looked truly ridiculous during her spasmodic pogoing outbursts and failed to transmit any of her enthusiasm to the audience .

Wah ! Heat were well and truly clobbered in the sound department so it would be unfair to judge them on this showing . Fortunately we had an opportunity for more objective assessment in Sheffield a couple of weeks later but at the Lyceum they made a horrible noise , and too broke to consider retiring to the bar I went home to Mummys .

bad manners - university

There must have been a few raised eyebrows at the seemingly inappropriate band/venue combination of Bad Manners and the university , as the ents people must have known this sort of band isn't quite to the average student's conservative tastes , while the union restrictions obviously discourage a lot of outsiders from coming . A dedicated hardcore did make the effort , and incredibly I overheard two big long-haired rugby player types saying they were scared to walk home with all these skinheads about . Media created images stick hard . The skins were probably the most cheerful and friendly crowd there .

Bad Manners are a pleasant enough live act but have a long way to go to get out of the ska league division two . They haven't got the bounce , song-

writing capabilities or marketable commitment of the Specials , and their choreographed lunacy never comes up to the standard set by Madness . Buster Bloodvessel doesn't even look quite as gross as the photos suggest , though I have to admit his tongue is pretty impressive (an obvious attraction for groupies). Bad Manners do show more genuine enthusiasm than most bands - you almost feel they must enjoy churning out the same stuff night after night , and as the guarded appreciation of the less committed members of the audience turned to a full scale dance party as the set wore on nothing could go wrong . The set was mostly the smooth reggae tunes of thevdebut album faithfully regurgitated , 'Ne-Ne Na-Na Na-Na Nu-Nu' saved for the encore of course , whereupon there was the obligatory stage invasion .

musical janeens & chico university

Good news for everyone who likes music to be fun without being predictable : THE JANEENS ARE BACK . When they were doing farewell gigs a few months back I said I couldn't believe we'd seen the last of them and I was right . Not only were Elliot , Rootes and Burdon back on the same stage but original Graph drummer Nik Allday aswell . Elliot was a late addition to the line-up , having only arrived back in this country a couple of days earlier , but he took no time at all to get into the swing of things and was screaming and shouting as dementedly as ever . Two trumpet players were on stage with them , and with Did (Martin Rootes) frequently playing trumpet aswell I kept thinking they were about to launch into 'Geno' or 'Message To You Rudy' . It almost sounded like they'd been holding clandestine rehearsals , rehearsals being against the point and principal of the Musical Janeens . The Janeens are still the only band I know who can improvise entertainingly for any length of time , on this occasion for an hour and twenty minutes , despite not starting till half an hour after the bar closed . Their natural style has a bit of soul , a bit of reggae and very little rock'n'roll and overall sounds nothing like anyone except themselves . Those who went home early missed the appearance of Chico , who got up on stage to deliver a monologue about Jah loving everyone and feeling the spirit , and once the band had stopped falling about in mirth at the cliches they got into the spirit of things and delivered some blistering music for Chico to sing along to . If they'd gone on all night the only people who'd have complained were the groups waiting to reclaim the equipment they'd lent . Can't wait to see them again .

Earlier we'd been warmed up by New Model Soldier , Objet D'Art and Sexual Lotion , the highpoint of who's set was when some bloke was carried on stage with his head stuck up his arse , and was placed on a table from where he proceeded to groan along to one number before being untied . This got the biggest applause of the evening .

what else has happened ?

In case you haven't noticed , I've been raving about Cambridge band THE SOFT BOYS at every possible opportunity , so I was over the moon when I discovered they were playing at Totley College , a distant outpost of the polytechnic to be found at the end of the 24 bus route , recently . It was encouraging to learn at this , their first Sheffield gig for well over two years , that I'm not the only fan they've got in Sheffield , and after a great performance

they've probably got a few more , even though with admission set at a mere 60p most of the audience thought it was worth paying just for the bar extension till midnight and didn't bother seeing the band . If they'd charged £1.50 they'd have been rivetted and demanded ten encores . I won't say too much about the music , except that there was a good proportion of new stuff among the album tracks - read my review of the album in last months 'NMX' and buy it . I met the group themselves , who were pleased to learn that somebody appreciates their music , and I even helped them dispose of their complimentary booze in the dressing room . In fact , I got totally brainless and felt very ill on the bus home . It was a good night out .

The university ents are now running Monday night gigs in Bar 2 at the students union , admittedly trying to pick up where Now Society was cut off . Though the organisation is far better than it used to be the music has yet to come up to much , though with Gary Cartwright of 'It's Different For Grils' advising on booking policy there's hope for improvement . Gigs go under the guise of 'The Maze' for some reason . A word for a Doncaster band called Saz Index , who supported B.Troop there and were grossly maligned by the publicity handouts , which more or less accused them of being Jam rip-offs which wasn't at all true . Some of their stuff was pretty interesting , basic but catchy tunes , one of which sounded like a psychedelic version of the James Bond theme . Can't remember anything else about them , more in a future issue no doubt .

THE SOFT BOYS

Vendinos contd.

of course I'm not the world's most probing interviewer but I was disappointed . I expected more . It could be the air of despondency regarding their chances of ever seeing fame and fortune which they suffer from , John Stuart in particular being afflicted with a sort of pessimistic , naive cynicism which colours his view of the music business - like everybodys against the artists and Rough Trade and CBS are equally guilty , something totally irreconcilable to my mind . So I'll make no predictions about their future . It's in their hands , more than they themselves believe , a brilliant band whose talent it would be sad to see going down the drain .

SEXUAL LOTION SEEKS SNAKEY SINGER WITH VERVE , VIGOUR AND DYNAROD . PHONE MIKE , SHEFFIELD 344076 .

VINYL/TAPES

Not enough votes for the album chart. To contribute list top 5 Singles and top 5 LPs. Send to Nik. 238 South Road. Sheff 6.

READERS CHART

1. (3) Terror Couple Kill Colonel BAUHAUS
2. (2) Love Will Tear Us Apart JOY DIVISION
3. (1) Independence Day COM-SAT ANGELS
4. (-) Enola Gay ORCHESTRAL MANOUEVRES
5. (-) When I Dream TEARDROP EXPLODES
6. (-) Generals And Majors XTC
7. (-) Totally Wired THE FALL
8. (4) Ashes To Ashes BOWIE
9. (8) How I Wrote Elastic Man THE FALL
10. (6) Western Mantra CABARET VOLTAIRE
11. (9) Total War COM-SAT ANGELS
12. (-) There Goes Concorde Again ...AND THE NATIVE HIPSTERS
13. (10) C30C60C90 Go BOW WOW WOW
14. (5) Touch I'M SO HOLLOW
15. (-) Drug Train THE CRAMPS
16. (12) Shack Up A CERTAIN RATIO
17. (-) Debbie Harry FAMILY FODDER
18. (22) Kings Of The Wild Frontier ADAM & THE ANTS
19. (7) Bankrobber THE CLASH
20. (25) Holiday In Cambodia DEAD KENNEDYS
21. (-) The Soldier Stood Alone B MOVIE
22. (19) Silent Command CABARET VOLTAIRE
23. (14) Get BLURT
24. (-) Another Million Miles BRIAN BRAIN
25. (-) Dog Eats Dog ADAM & THE ANTS
26. (18) Peter Paints His Fence EP INSTANT AUTOMATONS
27. (-) Requiem KILLING JOKE
28. (-) She's Lost Control Again JOY DIVISION
29. (-) Radio Drill Time JOSEF K
30. (-) Heyday THE SOUND

TAPES

'Murphy's Law' : NEW MODEL SOLDIER

I've come in for some flak from this group over my comparing them to the Young Marble Giants . Well , I know New Model Soldier haven't got a female singer or a drum machine but after listening to this tape I reckon the comparison is as valid as ever . It's the bass which does it , simple , regular and bubbling under everything , and they are undoubtedly a quiet group . That said , they're nowhere near as one paced , boring and unemotional as the YMGs . In fact , having listened to'Murphy's Law' several times I actually like it ! Paul Fern's jangled strings are pretty inventive , and while Dave Kurley won't go down in history as a great poet there's a cutting charm in the honestly expressed emotions of 'Distress Signals' , about when the girl you fancy is screwing someone you don't like , fascination in the futuristic nightmare vision of 'Action Replay' and more . New Model Soldier have gigged so much of late that if you're a Sheffielder you'll already know whether you want this tape or not . Price should hardly be a prohibitive factor as it's free to anyone sending a C60 and SAE to Dave Kurley at 131 Chaucer Road , Parson Cross , S5 9QL . Quality is good .

B TROOP : Yvette/Espionage-a-go-go/Emotional Assassin/Neon City

Four tracks from the latest line-up of Doncaster's finest . They've been through twenty-one members in all , which must make They Must Be Russians' place in the record books precarious , and have now dropped the three girl choir of angels . Synth player/vocalist Kevin Donoghue's accompanying letter carried a veiled sexist comment concerning female inabilities . Anyway , they now seem far more certain of what they're doing than on the tracks for the 'Logical Steps' and 'Bouquet Of Steel' compilations . It's futuristic but at the same time laid back and maturely constructed rock , all good stuff though I hope they're not getting too bland as they become more together . Don't know where you can get this tape , but there should be a single from it on the way .

SINKING SHIPS : Live at Sleaford Rock '80

This one comes from Dead Good Records in Lincoln , who're also putting out a single by the band , and I don't know how generally it's availiable but grab it if you get the chance . It's amazing how many groups are sounding more than a touch like Joy Division these days and though they'd probably throw up their hands in horror at the comparison it's too obvious to go unsaid . That doesn't mean it's any less good , because this is great modern dance music , at times sparse and doomy , at others warm and emotional . The spontaneity of a gig situation and the audience rapport helps . I want more .

SNIGLES

Snigle of the month award goes to Dorothy , who used to call herself Max and play drums in Rema Rema and seems to feature in Industrial Records' crusade to destroy people's preconceptions about the label . There's a nod to the sixties in the concept and the way it's presented , a nicer than nice looking and sounding young lady , up front in the mix confessing that she likes , among other things , Subway Sect , while Alex Fergusson's guitar bubbles away in the background in a bouncy , catchy tune . Can't really see hit stamped all over it but it's an enigmatic and highly desirable single all the same .

Snigle of the month if it was out yet would have gone th the double EP compilation 'Angst In My Pants' from Deleted Records , the label which brought you the Instant Automatons (in fact the label which is the Instant Automatons) . I sent off for a copy when people started voting for it in the readers chart , only to learn it was still at the pressing plant and receive a preview tape instead . You get an albums worth of material for the incredible bargain price of £1 mail order or £1.15 in selected non rip-off outlets , 16 tracks by nine

artists , most of which would be worth buying individually as singles . Apart from the fact that they've all previously adhered to the DIY cassette medium/ ethic the groups don't have a great deal in common . Missing Persons manage to make Joy Division sound positively happy by comparison with one of their tracks but sound quite ridiculously silly on the other . Colin Potter fills his time allocation with three very different electronic ditties . Then there's the perverse pop of the Digital Dinosaurs and the Midnight Circus (hey , Geoff , this is good stuff) , a great acoustic number called 'Weekday Lovecrush' by Mic Woods , the inimitable style of the Instant Automatons themselves and what sounds like a fair imitation of it by the 012 , whose 'Nine to Five' and 'In The Ghetto' are pretty bizarre . Support Deleted Records non-profit making enterprise and hear some listenable originality by rushing £1 to them at Low Farm , Brigg Road , Messingham , Scunthorpe , South Humberside . It should be out by now but I'm not certain so don't be too impatient .

Cabaret Voltaire and They Must Be Russians should both have new 7" product in the shops , both essential purchases for Sheffield musik lovers . The Cabs' latest effort kicks off with a sci-fi march tempo and League-ish keyboards but the rest is C.V. as we know and love them . The B-side is an old bogey called 'Control Addicts' which long time Cabs addicts may remember live . Unlike most Cabs flips it's as catchy (?) and danceable (?) as the A . The Russians release is the long overdue 'Don't Try To Cure Yourself' on Fresh Records , backed with 'Air To Breathe' which is probably the best thing they ever wrote despite the chorus's unfortunate similarity to the appalling old Hollies song - remember ? "Sometimes , all I need is the air that I breathe blah blah .... This is from the same session as 'Where Have I seen You ?' and though the recording doesn't quite capture the explosiveness of 'Don't Try ...'s r'n'r beat or the eerie starkness of 'Air To Breathe' it's nevertheless a great single and a vital memento for all Russians fans . There's an instrumental bonus track which is equally good . Let's hope the new line-up is as fabulous .

Among miscellaneous releases worth mentioning , three from Dead Good and Armageddon's latest two singles , starting with the Soft Boys 'I Wanna Destroy You' , from the album 'Underwater Moonlight' plugged last month , backed with the disco version of 'Old Pervert' . If you don't already know how great this group are then buy this and find out . The debyt 7" from Kimberley Rew is a big disappointment in view of Armageddon's track record , just ultra-average pop . The B-side features lyrics so bad they're embarassing , but I won't make you suffer unnecessarily by printing them here .

Dead Good have dug up the earliest recorded work of Ultravox , then known as Tiger Lily . Unfortunately on 'Monkey Jive' they lean towards the heavy rock end of glam and only give the faintest hints of the better things to come . Other Dead Good discs are by B-Movie and The Cigarettes , whose Hallamshire gig was reviewed last month . The Cigarettes' 'Can't Sleep At Night' is straight ahead , raucous sub-punk , and they sound like the original Lincoln punk group they are . Not at all bad , but not as good as B-Movie's 'Soldier Stood Alone' which seems to be getting some deserved attention . It's a great tune , intelligent post-punk type pop and a breath of fresh air at a time when originality is increasingly rare .

THE RESIDENTS COMMERCIAL ALBUM
REWIEWED BY ING

MALIBUS

About once a year the world's most unfashionable band come out of their closets and assault our consciousnesses with vinyl . The last new release was 'Eskimo' , on unfashionable coloured vinyl with no tracks at all as we think of them . Now , being obscure is 'in' and so are long concept albums , so naturally enough we have The Residents Commercial Album , forty tracks each exactly sixty seconds long . Listening to it for the first time is very disorientating : barely have you got comfortable than three tracks have bounced between your ears . Commercial ? No , the songs demand attention , there is enough material here for four albums but play each track four times and each song suddenly has the commercial potential of 'Love Will Tear Us Apart' or 'Happy House' .

Besides the four Residents the album has guests in the shape of Snakefinger , Fred Frith (formerly of Henry Cow , Art Bears and now signed to Ralph) and other assorted weirdos . In fact , one track sounds like Lene Lovich is singing but then The Residents were singing that way before her or Hazel O'Connor were . The songs are in The Residents' pop format - synth as bass , melodic percussion , chanted vocals and slithery guitar but the effect of all these songs in such a short space of time is anything but popularist ; it's like being plugged into some high-speed source of information and learning all the truths of the world in thirty seconds . The songs don't feel rushed though ; they were meant to last sixty seconds , no more , no less . The album will , to most people , just sound odd but the cogs amongst you will notice strangely mutated rock'n'roll , high school anthems , love songs....

Buy this product because all life is there , human or otherwise . The Committee for a Democratic Residency requests your support .

CLOCKDVA - THIRST

It's taken a long time for ClockDVA to become totally accepted in Sheffield , too many people distrusting the motives of DVA founder/mainman Adi Newton . After all , people who appear to be so totally immeresed in their art too often turn out to be fakes , though Adi's aggressive nihilism of the past would argue in his favour . Old grudges die hard , but they should finally be laid to rest with the release of this LP , which everyone who's heard it rates as a major achievement . Adi's psychotic warbling is the biggest element im creating the most distinctive sound around . If DVA had released an album 18 months ago it would have been acclaimed but it's taken till now for them to build up enough of a reputation for somebody to come up with the money , and it's been worth the wait . Two years of trying would turn many groups stale , but DVA have changed as well as refined - only Adi and Judd left of the original outfit and still maintaining a degree of separation from the rest - and what they've come up with is one of the most assured and near perfect debut albums I've ever heard , praise which will prove not to be too high when it's echoed again and again in more influential quarters . Look out for the Dave McCullough feature in 'Sounds'.

Though it only took a week to do, the production is superb , Ken Thomas's tiny tricks of the trade making a big difference when considered en masse . All DVA's current moods are here , from the jazzy aggression of 'Uncertain' to the fragile beauty of 'Blue Tone' , a subtle , romantic love song , no less . You mean these artists have human feelings ? Despite quips about this being the Charlie Collins album his sax isn't quite that dominant . In 'Blue Tone' it sounds more like The Extras than DVA's more cacophanous moments and in the equally incomparable '4 Hours' it sounds like the entire Talking Heads horn section , but Paul Widger's guitar doesn't make its full impact felt on first listen because it's inventive rather than obvious . Roger Quail's drumming is brilliant as usual , Judd's bass punching away solidly . I've listened to a cassette of the whole thing over and over again , once four times non-stop and each time something different hits me . Devastatingly original throughout , I need hardly tell Sheffield fans to buy this LP . There'll be queues forming outside Virgin Records on the release date , scheduled for sometime in November . Look out .

****

DRUMMER AND KEYBOARD PLAYER WANTED TO JOIN BASSIST AND LEAD GUITARIST . ALL? OFFERS CONSIDERED BUT OWN GEAR ESSENTIAL . CONTACT JOHN VIA SHEFFIELD 22771 .

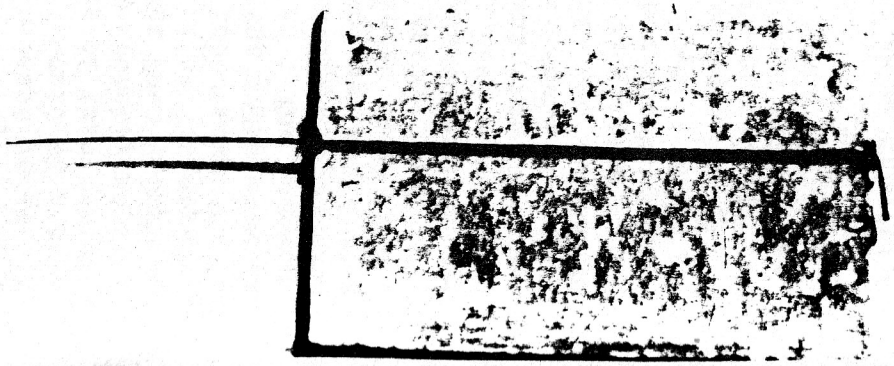
DAVE HAMMOND (EX DVA GUITARIST) REQUIRES 1. PERCUSSIONISTS (ELECTRONIC & ACOUSTIC) 2. BASSIST 3. FEMALE VOCALIST . TELEPHONE NOTTINGHAM 212186 or REPLY VIA SHEFF. UNIVERSITY U.N.B. or WRITE 130 HARCOURT ROAD , SHEFFIELD 10 .

the SPASMS

When I last wrote about the Spasms about a year ago things were looking pretty good for them . A self produced and financed single on the way and an adoring following among the Chesterfield punk crowd . Bigger things looked imminent . But the single , alright in its way , failed to set the world alight though it did make number 6 in an independent/import chart in San Francisco , and the Spasms disappeared from the view of the public .

'It just fell apart really' one of them explained . Now the Spasms are back , not exactly bouncing with optimism but grimly determined to claw their way upwards . The problem is , there's a lot of lost ground to make up . When I saw them at the Royal there was a reasonable turn out of locals but no trace of the mob who used to follow them about : 'Everyone's forgotten about us . Nobody knows whether or not we're still together . A lot of people don't class us as a true punk band any more . They used to take us for the image rather than the music and they won't do that any more . We'd sooner do what we're doing and have no audience' .

What they're doing , to my ears , sounds like the same basic full tilt near-punk they always played , as they call it , 'basic rock'n' roll' . Stick the word 'modern' in there somewhere and that just about sums it up . They're incredibly tight , which suggests they're the sort of band who'd go down great supporting the UK Subs or someone on tour , but as yet haven't got the material to make it big on their own . A second single is projected , so the verdict will postponed till then . My immediate impression though is that the Spasms' best chances of fame and fortune are in the past .



whatever happened to xero?

ANSWER :

the chant & past 7 days

It was some time after Xero split that guitar/vocalist Alan Russell and drummer Norty got back together to form another band after Norty's tentative union with ex Stunt Kites John Allan and Nigel Renshaw had come to nothing . They linked with one time Jump bassist Terry and guitarist Stuart Arfield to form I.V.I. , later renamed The Chant . The music they've come up with sounds like they've taken Xero's catchy , commercial but ultimately sterile neu pop-rock , warped and mutilated it , cross bred it with more extreme influences and gone through the same sort of musical de-evolution process as the Com-Sat Angels , with whom they also share an all-pervading precision drum beat and a penchant for 'funny noises' . In the six months they've been together they've evolved a powerful , melodic , original sound , one or two songs still with that easy pop feel ('Simple Talk') , others headlong frenetic rushes ('Making The News', 'Haven't A Chance') and others altogether more challenging , such as their weird and wonderful version of 'On Broadway' . There've been a few low key gigs in Sheffield and if nobody here's screaming 'amazing' yet then at least persons connected with The Cure recognise their potential , having selected them from tapes sent in in response to an ad in the music press for a support slot on their tour . I've only heard The Chant once , at a rehearsal , so I've yet to figure out whether they will be famous or not , not that my predictions are ever right of course ! Whatever , they're a great band , worthy of your attention at least . They have something and when I find out what I'll let you know ....

..... meanwhile , another two fifths of Xero , bassist Max and guitarist John , wasted no time in getting down to the music business again , forming Past 7 Days with drummer Colin Gaynor and synth/saxist Trevor Dooley . I first saw them at the Leadmill supporting Cabaret Voltaire back in July and was interested , though I didn't pay them much attention 'cause I was too busy trying to sell copies of 'NMX' , What I did notice , and what everyone notices first time they see the band , is that they were using fairly conventional funk rhythms . Now while white groups have been busy plagiarising reggae and converting it to a more avant-garde sound for many a year hardly anyone's tried doing something original with the disco beat , simply because reggae is hip and disco isn't . Could this be a great untapped source of inspiration ? The next big thing ? Probably not . Anyway , when I caught Past 7 Days again doing a C.N.D. benefit at the Royal they seemed to have toned down the funk element , with only the drums staying largely faithful to it . The opening number was an unpromising instrumental which made me fear the set would be an exhibition of how clever they could all be , as they're all pretty competent musicians . Better was to come though : Past 7 Days actually have some nice tunes , an intelligent line in Cure-ish minimalism and an all round modernist appeal , perhaps a bit too smooth for my tastes , though I'd be willing to give them more than another checking out . The turn-out at the Royal , which must have been more packed than any gig since They Must Be Russians opened the venue , liked them enough . More info about the band in the current issue of 'Its Different For Grils' .

PULP ↓

There's very little I can tell you about Pulp , because I asked them to send me some information about them and they never did (If you're reading this , why not ? Don't you want to be famous ?) . I saw them at the Royal , which despite the (lack of) atmosphere is by a long way the best place for discovering new talent in Sheffield , and their music seems to be a mixed bag of all things modern , as if they listen to the John Peel show every night in an endless quest for influences . They look so young you think they ought to be too busy studying for their 'O' le-

OBJET D'ART

First I heard of Objet D'Art , not to be confused with Objets D'Art , which is what the Art Objects are calling themselves while the Various Artists are on tour (anyone who understands that jot down your explanation on a postcard....), was when somebody wearing one of their badges refused to tell me who they were . Mysterious , I thought . Then when I saw their first ever gig , Bar 2 , July this year , I thought they were a group of at least moderately competent musicians messing about and it was only recently I discovered that could hardly be further from the truth . Objet D'Art are Angie Watson (vocals) , Cath Hardacre (bass) , Anne Francis (guitar) and Gayle Armstrong (drums) and they first got together because their friends were in a group (Sexual Lotion) and they felt left out . Having selected a name the first step was to make badges and go flyposting . A month or two later they considered the possibility of learning how to play some instruments , as Anne was the only one who had any musical experience - grade 8 clarinet . So they borrowed Sexual Lotion's gear in February and started out on their meteoric rise to the top . Their recent CND gig in Bar 2 was a revelation . Not only is it hard to believe they've only been playing a few months but their songs are really good , bizarre garageband pop with some of the spirit of the Mekons and a touch of Mo-dettes and Raincoats 'In Love' . Anne's lead guitar style shows she's the one who knows how to put a song together but the contributions of the other three are not to be underestimated . It would be tempting to say they should take themselves more seriously , but if you don't have any burning ambition or pretence to fame and fortune then you can't feel let down when you don't make it , the I'm So Hollow attitude . I just hope their play-for-fun-only ethics don't mean they'll deprive potential audiences of the chance to see them . It doesn't necessarily mean jumping on the r'n'r treadmill . If for no other reason then Objet D'Art will be remembered for inventing a new game , called 'musical musical instruments' : when the music stops you grab somebody else's instrument and whoever doesn't get one has to sing . Actually it probably wasn't as random as all that , but the instruments attributed to the musicians above are only what they started out with . Get to see Objet D'Art soon . This really is entertainment .

PULP (contd.)

vels to be messing about with these damned pop groups , but I understand one of them works in the fish market . Anyway , they don't appear to have seen enough of life to be obsessed with doom and despair , instead covering more superficial subjects such as 'Message From The Martians' and 'Disco Baby' . Despite comparatively elementary musical ability and a slight togetherness problem they're a fun band and definitely one to watch for in the future .

GREY LENS MEN

Over the last couple of months things have happened to make me think there's life in punk as a movement and a music yet . I go to London and see punks pogoing to Cabaret Voltaire , which is great , because C.V. and T.G. have more to do with the original spirit and ideals of the Sex Pistols than legions of derivative three chord dirge merchants with no lyrical or musical originality . But C.V. and T.G. are too old , too artistic and too clever , too safe almost , to save a movement they've appreciated but never embraced . Which is where groups like Shattered Life , Best Left Dead and now Grey Lens Men come in , young , punky and enthusiastic , amateurish but original , exciting and most important accessible , to everyone . Grey Lens Men are the sort of group who don't think it uncool to be seen dancing to the support band . They come from Matlock , which by all accounts is as dull as it sounds so they have more reason than most to really appreciate live action . Their music is based on the currently vogue Ants-style tribal drum beat , hypnotic rhythms over which they deliver an eerie blend of abstract guitar and keyboard sounds , manic , intense . Unlike Joy Division , they've lost control again . They're dedicated to small , intimate gigs where an audience has to take notice . Lens Men music grabs you and drags you in , almost the 'experience' they want it to be . They've only done a few gigs to date (anyone who can give them more phone Matlock 2764) but I don't think they'll lose their charm as they become more polished and I really hope we'll be seeing more of them soon . A Com-Sat Angel was impressed ; so why not offer them some support dates lads ?

The Cramped Legs are a new Sheffield four piece consisting of Simon Rippon (vocals) , John Reynolds (guitar) , Paul Flynn (bass) andIan Lambert (drums) , who've been around for four gigs since forming in March and have earned a total of £4 in their career to date . I caught them by chance supporting Frenchie at the Royal recently , having been previously interested by their matty line in badges and T-shirts (badges free for an SAE from 57 Wheata Road , S5 9FL , T-shirts - make your own !) . Despite the fairly normal looks of the group they play a variation on the standard '77-ish Sham style punk , a few slower numbers and subtleties here and there , but all pretty basic to match their abilities and giving little hint of their more diverse musical tastes , 'from The Beatles to Bill Nelson to Adam & The Ants' . Already they're getting some sort of following , a respectable 75 customers at the Hallamshire , and their appreciative fans are among the brightest young things and thingettes on the local punk scene , outshone perhaps only by the Shattered Life tribe . Could the Cramped Legs cross over and attract the hero-worshipping Top Rank teenypunk hordes ? Probably not till they've been on 'Top Of The Pops' and more's the pity . There's no socio-political tirades in the set , just songs about 'everyday happenings , friends and girls' . John has a T-shirt with the words 'Naaden Cunt' bleached into the fabric and that's as far as their philosophical comments go . Can't remember much about individual numbers except writing songs about prostitutes seems like pointless sensationalism . A minor black mark . More significant , were The Cramped Legs in any way connected with a band called The Crap who left a similar trail of stickers in prominent places around Sheffield many moons ago ? And if so does this qualify them for the 'semi-legendary'tag ? These questions and more will be answered in a future issue of 'NMX' .

SURFACE MUTANTS

I missed The Surface Mutants' debut gig , at this year's university free festival , but Russ Russian spoke of them highly afterwards , assuring me that they sounded just like The Distractions , a comparison which proved to be about as accurate as saying the Flying Alphonso Brothers are heavily plagiarising Throbbing Gristle ! Nevertheless , I like The Distractions , so if Russ was just trying to get me to go along and see them he succeeded . Surface Mutants are a pop band , consisting of Pete Brennan (synth/guitar/vocals) , Rich Pamott (guitar/vocals) , Kent (sax) , Angie (bass) and Jules (drums) , though their vision of pop is altogether more forward looking , thoughtful and aggressive , probably influenced by everything from the Undertones to the Pop Group . Now I've seen them twice live and once in rehearsal I'm getting to know the songs , find myself humming one of their tunes and not realise what it is for ages , so they must have some considerable potential . I don't know what they're doing in the immediate future but they come highly recommended anyway .

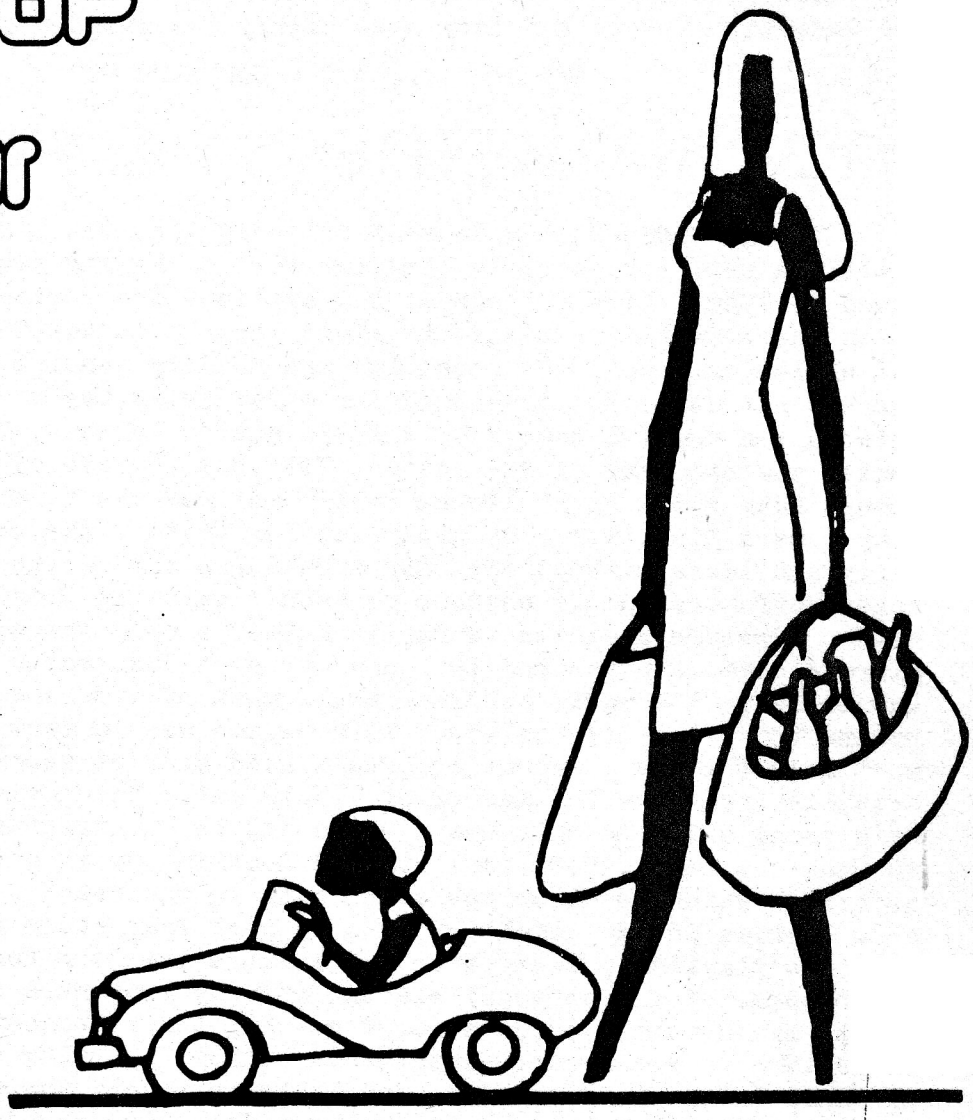
AND NOW .... NOT A NEW BAND BUT

martin kelner OF RADIO HALLAM!

Though Radio Hallam is statistically the most listened to station in the Sheffield area you could be forgiven for not having your dial permanently tuned to 194m . Like all commercial stations the necessity of selling airtime means the programming has to be aimed largely at the 25+ age consumer market , and while Roger Moffat's appalling and totally genuine idiocy can be amusing there's not much else to occupy the ears during the day . Three nights a week between ten and two however , there's Martin Kelner , by a mile the best presenter you can hear on the radio . It's not because of his musical tastes , though Adam & The Ants' 'Young Parisians' was the first thing I ever heard him play , more his witty , slightly cutting style , the way he conveys his personality and ideas without actually speaking his mind the way Roger Moffat does . Roger Moffat can do it because he hasn't anything broadly controversial im his head . I became addicted to Martin Kelner's show through my habit of destroying alarm clocks . In the end the only way me & Judi could get up in the morning was to leave the radio on all night , most of his show vaguely penetrating our brains before falling asleep . This became such a part of our lives I decided I must meet the man , and we enjoyed a good deal of speculation about what he'd actually look like . I was wrong . He's not a fat jovial man of about forty . He's young with red hair and a beard and he was originally employed by Hallam to read the news . He's just started doubling on an afternoon current affairs programme which he describes as 'a pain in the arse' , preferring the night show because nobody complains when he goes four hours without playing one record from the playlist , because he can indulge his love for old comedy records , and because of the personal element whereby listeners can phone up and get through to the man himself and be sure of getting their dedications aired . Though he would like to see a more adventurous policy regarding what's played on Hallam his main interest is comedy , and if he ever gets the cash and the courage to pack his job in he intends to become a full-time comedy writer himself . As for the popular view of record company/radio station relationships , he says he's never been offerred any sort of bribe and wishes he had , though one or two Hallam persons recently went to the launch party of an album in London where they listened to the record through headphones on a Sony cassette deck while having dinner , after which they were told they just 'might as well' keep the cassette deck , everybody going home with some £200 worth of hardware . Which album ? You can bet it wasn't Cabaret Voltaire's .

What else? He thinks Hallam shouldn't have a legal regional monopoly in commercial radio and in view of it's commercial nature they should do away with all pretence of being a public service . Remember the name : Martin Kelner . Highly recommended for insomniacs .

B.TROOP
Junior



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